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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 010366

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DEPARTMENT FOR P, EUR, NEA, PM, IO, EAP

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PFLP](#) [PREL](#) [ID](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: INDONESIAN PEACEKEEPING PREPARATIONS FOR LEBANON

REF: A. STATE 134133 SOLICITING CONTRIBUTIONS UNIFIL

[1](#)B. USUN 01545 UNIFIL FORCE GENERATION UPDATE

[1](#)C. STATE 132517 SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON
LEBANON

[1](#)D. STATE 124162 FORCE GENERATION MEETING

Classified By: Ambassador B. Lynn Pascoe, for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Indonesia is preparing to send a 1000 troops to serve in UN-led peacekeeping operations in Lebanon. The composite force includes elements from a range of Indonesian military units, including mechanized and engineering elements. Indonesia lacks airlift capability for transporting the equipment to theater, but has not requested U.S. assistance in this area. A request for 32 armored personnel carriers from France will likely be granted, according to French embassy officials in Jakarta, assuming France accepts command of the UN operation. Indonesian President Yudhoyono has portrayed the deployment within the context of Indonesian diplomatic efforts within the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and a response to "Israeli aggression." End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Indonesia's preparations to send a battalion-sized unit to the Middle East as part of UN peacekeeping operations for Lebanon continue to move forward. Since plans were first announced in late July, the size of the projected force has grown from under 600 to 1,000 personnel. Plans foresee an initial stay of 12 months, if requested. The battalion-sized force, which is being assembled for the first time, will consist of 850 troops plus 150 support staff, military police and guard units. Led by a Colonel Surawahadi, Commander of the 17th Brigade of the Indonesian Army, it will be composed of elements of the Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force, Strategic Forces (KOSTRAD) and Air Force Special Forces. The Army contingent includes cavalry, while the Marine contingent comprises a mechanized company and a logistical company with armored vehicles and unarmored personnel carriers. Engineering elements will be included as well.

[1](#)3. (C) Although publicly the force is said to be ready for deployment, Indonesian defense officials have privately described it as 75 to 80 percent ready, with an estimated deployment in the region in October. It is not clear whether the force is receiving special or advanced training in preparation. Military contacts admit to needing money for repairing the equipment that is to be used and have confirmed

that the Indonesian military has requested to use 32 armored vehicles from France for the operation.

¶4. (C) Current plans call for personnel to be flown and equipment to be shipped by sea to the Middle East. Contacts in the Indonesian military acknowledge that the military does not have the capability to provide adequate, sustained lift for the operation. So far, there has been no request for U.S. assistance in transporting either troops or equipment to the theater of operations.

¶5. (C) The French DATT, however, confirmed that France had received a request, which had been conveyed directly between capitals, for 32 wheeled armored personnel carriers. He said no decision had been made on the request but saw no reason why it should not be approved. Indonesian Presidential Advisers Dino Patti Djalal also confirmed to us that Indonesia had requested APC's from France.

¶6. (C) Indonesian President Yudhoyono has announced that Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora and French President Jacques Chirac called him on August 13 to request Indonesia's help in monitoring the ceasefire in Lebanon. The French DCM in Jakarta has told us, however, that Yudhoyono requested to speak with Chirac so that Yudhoyono could convey Indonesia's desire to send forces.

¶7. (U) Domestically, Yudhoyono has implicitly portrayed the deployment as a fruit of Indonesian diplomatic actions. In a state of the union speech to the House of Representatives on August 16, Yudhoyono said Indonesia's support for the struggle of the Palestinian people to realize an independent and sovereign Palestinian state had led Indonesia to take

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"proactive measures to end the Israeli aggression on Lebanon." Indonesia and Malaysia had initiated the convening of an emergency summit of the OIC in Kuala Lumpur, which had produced a declaration urging the United Nations to end the conflict in Lebanon. Indonesia therefore welcomed the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1701. As evidence of its commitment, Indonesia stood ready to join a UN peacekeeping force "in order to protect the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples from Israeli attacks."

¶8. (C) In remarks to the press, MFA Director for International Security and Disarmament Hasan Kleib stressed Indonesia was participating only under Chapter 6 of the UN Charter, since under chapter 6 the costs of the operation would be reimbursed and Indonesian forces would not be placed under another country's command. (Privately, Foreign Ministry officials have called the resolution six-plus-plus). Separately, Finance Minister Sri Mulyani said expenses for the deployment should be approved by the Budget Commission of the House of Representatives (DPR) since the funding was above the approved national budget.
PASCOE